

MEMORANDUM

TO: Certification Program Instructor/Evaluators and Coordinators

FROM: Phil Mele, State Training Director

SUBJECT: Notice of Changes to State Certification and Training Program Policies and Procedures

DATE: June 26, 2006

Listed below is information on changes to the Office of the State Fire Marshal (OSFM) certification and training program procedures for registration and testing. These changes will affect all State training programs.

If planned changes to the certification testing process are not in place at the time an approved program ends, the OSFM will conduct testing using the current scheduling guidelines.

STARS

The OSFM Training Records and class registration are now on-line with the Statewide Training and Registration System, STARS, operated by the Arizona Government University at www.azgu.gov.

All certification programs will be assigned a STARS event number to replace the previously issued SFMO/OSFM number. For an individual in a program or class to be eligible to receive a State Training Certificate, or to qualify to test for State Certification, it is now required that he or she complete a program which was assigned a STARS event number by the OSFM.

A program I/E or class coordinator receiving a STARS number is responsible to have each attending student register for the program on STARS at www.azgu.gov.

CERTIFICATION PROGRAMS

All Certification Programs must receive a STARS number from the OSFM at least 30 days prior to the initial class meeting to permit successful participants to test for State Certification. The thirty-day lead time is necessary for the OSFM to enter the program information in the STARS catalog. Instructors, under their personal EIN, will be able to view and print the STARS class roster. Registration for a Certification Program will automatically close on the date established by the OSFM at the time of Program approval and assignment of the STARS number. This date will typically be not more than 2 weeks after the first class meeting.

REGISTRATION

On-line STARS registration is the responsibility of the Program I/E or class Coordinator. The STARS class roster is the official roster the OSFM will use to qualify candidates as eligible to test for State Certification or to receive a State Certificate of Completion.

A student must register at www.azgu.gov using the STARS event number assigned to the class by the OSFM. To register, a student must have a personal Electronic Identification Number (EIN) received when registering in STARS.

IMPORTANT: To register in STARS a person must have a current email address at a fire department or a personal email account. Any change to an OSFM training record and confirmation of registration in a training event is automatically sent to the listed email account.

ELECTRONIC IDENTIFICATION NUMBER – EIN

The personal EIN provides the ability to:

1. Register on-line for any OSFM certification program, training class and the State Fire School.
2. Receive email confirmation of class registration.
3. Pay any required OSFM fees on-line using a MasterCard, Visa or American Express credit card.
4. View a personal OSFM training record from any computer with access to the web.

In the near future the EIN will allow:

- 1) State Certification written tests to be taken by computer at a participating Community College testing center. The results of the test will automatically be sent to the candidate's email address at the end of the test.
- 2) Copies of State Certificates of Class Completion can be printed at any computer with access to the web.

CERTIFICATION TESTING –WRITTEN

The OSFM is currently working to place all State Certification written examinations on-line through participating Community College test centers around the State. The beginning of on-line certification testing is currently planned for October 2006.

On-line testing will require a STARS EIN number to allow eligible candidates to register with the OSFM and receive a test authorization code. Test authorization codes will only be issued to candidates appearing on a STARS roster and documented by a Program I/E as successfully completing an approved certification program.

Candidates should be prepared to pay a test fee to the OSFM at test registration. A test fee will be required for each, of up to three, testing attempts toward certification.

CERTIFICATION TESTING –PRACTICAL SKILL

Beginning August, 2006 the OSFM will assume responsibility to establish, staff and coordinate the location and date of all Fire Fighter I&II Practical Skill Examinations. Programs are encouraged to recommend interested Instructor/Evaluators to the OSFM for the test evaluator pool.

Multiple weekend (Saturday) Practical Examination locations may be scheduled on the same date. Qualified test candidates will have to register to test at a specific location.

Test dates and locations will be designated by August 30 for testing in the months of November and December. Test dates and locations will be designated by December 30 for testing in the months of May and June.

Depending on when a program ends, a Candidate may expect to test from 1 to 4 weeks after the end of a program. A test location may require travel for participants.

A weekend test event will be scheduled using Proctors and Evaluators drawn from the OSFM test pool that may, or may not be from the participating program. OSFM test Proctors and Evaluators will be paid by the OSFM for time and mileage (when travel exceeds 40 miles one way) for each test.

Registration for a test will require a STARS EIN number for authorization to attend a Practical Skill Test. Test attendance authorization will only be issued to candidates appearing on a STARS roster and documented by a Program I/E as successfully completing an approved certification program.

Candidates should be prepared to pay a test fee to the OSFM at test registration. A test fee will be required for each of up to three testing attempts toward certification.

INDIVIDUAL CERTIFICATION PROGRAM TESTING

A program may sponsor a local program test by coordinating the test date with the OSFM at time of program submittal. If approved, the OSFM will assign a Proctor(s) and Evaluators using the standard test assignment procedure. Evaluators for a local test may, or may not be from the participating program.

The test sponsor will reimburse the OSFM for all local test costs to include Proctor and Evaluator hourly rate, mileage, and any room and per diem expenses. Payment of a test fee to the OSFM will be required of each candidate at time of registration.

PHYSICAL AND FITNESS CRITERIA FOR STATE CERTIFICATION

The State Fire Fighter Certification Program medical requirements can be found in NFPA Standard 1582, Standard on Medical Requirements for Fire Fighters and Information for Fire Department Physicians, as required by NFPA Standard 1001, 2002 Edition.

Fitness requirements are established by the sponsor of a program approved for State Certification.

ACCOMMODATION FOR DISABILITY

All accommodation requirements for qualified candidates for State Certification Testing are the responsibility of the approved training program.

PHYSICAL/MEDICAL

A qualified candidate meeting the Medical Requirements for Fire Fighters under NFPA Standard 1582 will be accommodated for practical skill State Certification testing.

READING

A qualified candidate with a reading disability documented by a certified/licensed professional in the field will be accommodated for written State Certification testing.

RESIDENCY

Only Arizona residents may test for State Certification. State Certification Program policy **requires** a person to present an Arizona Driver License as proof of residency.

OUTREACH TRAINING CLASSES

All approved training classes must receive a STARS number from the OSFM at least 30 days prior to the initial class meeting if participants expect to receive an OSFM Training Certificate. Registration for Outreach Training Classes will automatically close 7 calendar days prior to the first class meeting. OSFM funded classes with less than 15 registered students will be cancelled and any fees collected will be returned to the student.

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